

## Dubaldo Marie Claire

### "The Band Played Waltzing Matilda"

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The Band Played Waltzing Matilda, Eric Bogle

When I was a young man I carried me pack  
And I lived the free life of the rover  
From the Murray's green basin to the dusty outback  
I waltzed my Matilda all over  
Then in 1915 my country said: Son,  
It's time to stop rambling, there's work to be done  
So they gave me a tin hat and they gave me a gun  
And they sent me away to the war

And the band played Waltzing Matilda  
When the ship pulled away from the quay  
And amid all the tears, flag waving and cheers  
We sailed off for Gallipoli

It well I remember that terrible day  
When our blood stained the sand and the water  
And how in that hell they call Suvla Bay  
We were butchered like lambs at the slaughter  
Johnny Turk, he was ready, he primed himself well  
He rained us with bullets, and he showered us with  
shell  
And in five minutes flat, we were all blown to hell  
He nearly blew us back home to Australia

And the band played Waltzing Matilda  
When we stopped to bury our slain  
Well we buried ours and the Turks buried theirs  
Then it started all over again

Oh those that were living just tried to survive  
In that mad world of blood, death and fire  
And for ten weary weeks I kept myself alive  
While around me the corpses piled higher  
Then a big Turkish shell knocked me arse over head  
And when I awoke in me hospital bed  
And saw what it had done, I wished I was dead  
I never knew there was worse things than dying

Oh no more I'll go Waltzing Matilda

All around the green bush far and near  
For to hump tent and pegs, a man needs both legs  
No more waltzing Matilda for me

They collected the wounded, the crippled, the maimed  
And they shipped us back home to Australia  
The armless, the legless, the blind and the insane  
Those proud wounded heroes of Suvla  
And when the ship pulled into Circular Quay  
I looked at the place where me legs used to be  
And thank Christ there was no one there waiting for me  
To grieve and to mourn and to pity

And the Band played Waltzing Matilda  
When they carried us down the gangway  
Oh nobody cheered, they just stood there and stared  
Then they turned all their faces away

Now every April I sit on my porch  
And I watch the parade pass before me  
I see my old comrades, how proudly they march  
Renewing their dreams of past glories  
I see the old men all tired, stiff and worn  
Those weary old heroes of a forgotten war  
And the young people ask "What are they marching  
for?"  
And I ask myself the same question

And the band plays Waltzing Matilda  
And the old men still answer the call  
But year after year, their numbers get fewer  
Someday, no one will march there at all

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda  
Who'll come a-Waltzing Matilda with me?  
And their ghosts may be heard as they march by the  
billabong  
So who'll come a-Waltzing Matilda with me?

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